



midge

representative species

Kingdom:	Animalia
Division/Phylum:	Arthropoda
Class:	Insecta
Order:	Diptera
Family:	Chironomidae

Features

Midges undergo complete metamorphosis (egg, larva, pupa, adult). The larva has a slender, wormlike segmented body that is about one-half inch long. It is red, yellowish, greenish, or whitish with a dark head and four tiny legs. Red larvae are called “blood worms.” Adults resemble a small mosquito. The male has fuzzy antennae. Wings are long and narrow.

Natural History

Larval midges live in bottom sediments of lakes, ponds, and streams. Adults are found in nearly all habitats. They often occur in large swarms near ponds and lakes. The larva eats other larvae, algae, microorganisms, and decaying matter. The female deposits a gelatinous mass of eggs on the water's surface or attached to submerged vegetation. Most adults do not bite.

Habitats

Mississippi River; Missouri River; interior rivers and streams; natural lakes and prairie marshes; wet prairies and fens; constructed lakes, ponds, and reservoirs

Iowa Status

common; native

Iowa Range

statewide

Bibliography

Iowa Department of Natural Resources. 2001.
Biodiversity of Iowa: Aquatic Habitats CD-ROM.